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Subchapter 7. General Industry Safety Orders Group 1. General Physical Conditions and Structures Article 4. Access, Work Space, and Work Areas §3270.1. Use of Rope Access Equipment.

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§3270.1. Use of Rope Access Equipment.

(a) Scope and Application. This section establishes safety requirements for rope access and the use, care and maintenance of rope access equipment as defined in Section 3207. Rope supported work shall be permitted only when other means of access are not feasible or would increase the risk of injury to the employee and/or the public. The requirements of this section include, but are not limited to, the inspection of dams and spillways, access to interior or exterior structural and architectural components of buildings, highway/bridge inspection and maintenance, and access to powerplant penstocks.

Exception: (1) Window cleaning and exterior building maintenance as regulated by Articles 5 and 6 of these Orders; (2) Emergency search and rescue operations; (3) Entertainment performances and rehearsals.

(b) Approval. Rope access equipment shall be approved for its intended use as defined in Section 3206 of these Orders.

(c) Training.

(1) The employer shall establish, implement and maintain a written Code of Safe Practices for rope access work. The written Code of Safe Practices shall include, but not be limited to the following elements:

- a. Methods of rope access and anchorage used by the employer.
- b. Employee selection criteria.
- c. Equipment selection and inspection criteria.
- d. Roles and responsibilities of rope access team members.
- e. Communication systems.
- f. Employee training program.

g. Rescue and emergency protocol.

h. Identification of any unique site hazards that may affect the safety of employees using rope access methods.

(2) Employees shall be trained in accordance with the Code of Safe Practices, including rescue techniques. The employer shall evaluate the competence of the employee to perform rope access in accordance with the Code of Safe Practices including a hands-on demonstration by the employee of his/her rope access skills.

(3) Employees who perform rope access shall receive annual refresher training. The training shall include a reevaluation (e.g., hands-on demonstration) of the employee's ability to perform rope access in accordance with the Code of Safe Practices.

(4) Documentation of employee training shall be maintained as required by Section 3203 of these Orders.

(d) Equipment Inspection and Maintenance.

(1) The manufacturer's recommendations for use, care, inspection and maintenance of rope access equipment shall be followed.

(2) A qualified person shall inspect rope access equipment each day before and after use to determine that the equipment is safe for its intended use.

(3) Damaged or defective rope access equipment shall be immediately removed from service.

(e) Anchorage. Anchorages shall be sufficient to safety support at least twice the maximum anticipated dynamic load imposed upon them as determined by a qualified person.

(f) Personal Protective Equipment. Employees performing rope access work shall be provided personal protective equipment in accordance with Article 10 of these Orders.

(g) There shall be at least two trained employees present when rope access equipment and techniques are used.

(h) Trainer Qualifications. Employees who use rope access equipment and/or perform rope access shall be trained by persons with the qualifications and experience necessary to effectively instruct the employee in the proper fundamentals of rope access, equipment, and techniques as described in subsection (c) of this section.

(i) The employer shall provide for the prompt rescue of employees in case of equipment malfunction or a fall, or shall assure that employees are able to rescue themselves.

(j) A safety, secondary, belay, or backup line, or other appropriate fall arrest device shall be used when the main line is the primary means of support, unless the employer can demonstrate that the second line or other fall arrest device would create a greater hazard or would otherwise be infeasible.

(1) When a safety line is used in conjunction with the main line, each line shall be provided with a separate anchor, and shall be separately fixed to the employee's harness. This shall not prohibit both lines from being attached to a single harness attachment point.

(k) Precautions (e.g., barricades, warning lines) shall be taken to control vehicular traffic and/or prevent unauthorized persons from walking or working beneath employees performing rope access operations.

(l) The employer shall conduct a pre-rope access briefing to discuss the objective(s) of the rope access work to be performed, any unusual site-specific hazards or environmental conditions that could affect the

safety of the employee, and emergency procedures to be followed (e.g., employee rescue).

NOTE

Authority cited: Section 142.3, Labor Code. Reference: Section 142.3, Labor Code.

HISTORY

1. New section filed 8-4-2000; operative 9-3-2000 (Register 2000, No. 31

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